



The following presentation was made as part of a panel discussion on Collective Impact at the 30th Annual Trails and Greenways Conference.

Panel members were:

- Laura Cohen, Director, Western Region – Rails to Trails Conservancy (National Advocacy Organization)
- Laura Thompson, SF Bay Trail Project Manager – Association of Bay Area Governments
- Yves Zsutty, Trail Manager, Department of Parks Recreation and Neighborhood Services – City of San Jose

Speaking Points:

San Jose is California's oldest civil settlement – founded in 1777

A great location for biking and walking; level topography, 300 days of sunshine

The bordering hills support many rivers and creeks through the valley – site for most of our trail development

We use **Collective Impact** strategies to engage with many external agencies in order to achieve common goals and missions



- As background – San Jose is a great place for recreation:
- Plaza De Cesar Chavez serves as an iconic green space downtown and has been the city's heart since 1777
- The 150-acre Guadalupe River Trail travels through downtown and represents the community's long-term advocacy for a better flood control approach that mixes recreation and open space preservation.



- San Jose's Mayor and Council approved the Green Vision, which guides development of a 100-mile interconnected trail network by 2022.
- 57 miles are already in place.
- Our efforts now are to close gaps and extend the major core systems.



Trails have positively impacted San Jose – making it more livable and bike-friendly

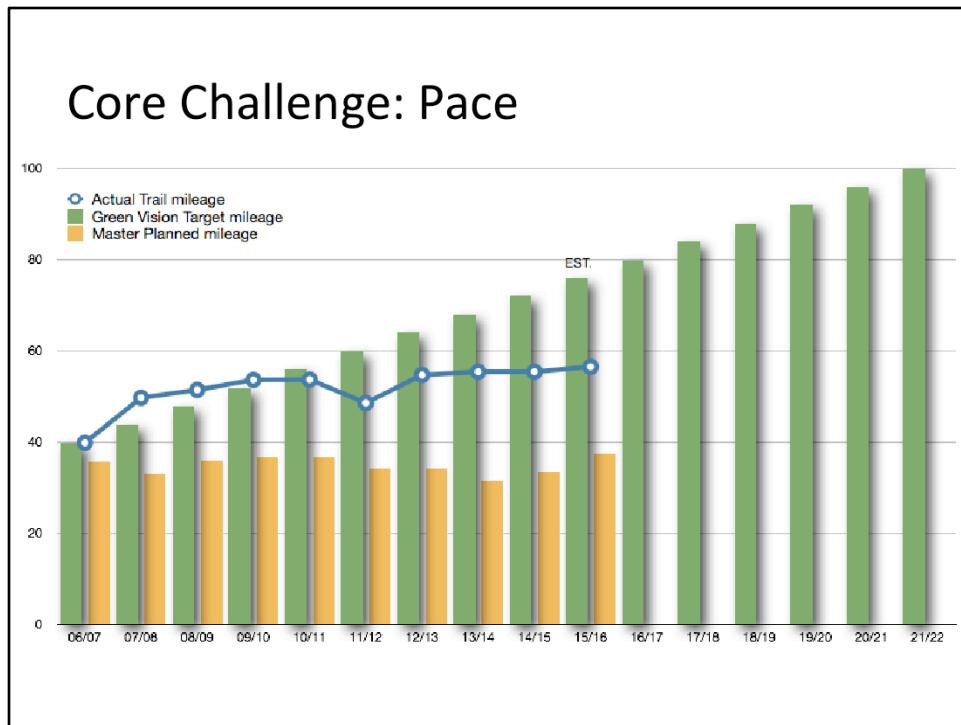


We view trails as parks in their own right

Our trail development includes a commitment to design and quality.

These images show how to carry design elements from the Guadalupe River Park along the 6.4-mile extension of the Lower Guadalupe River Trail.

These quality facilities continue to draw more and more trail users per our annual count and survey



We have seen the pace of construction slow over the past several years. Master planning and design work are supporting future shovel-ready work. We see the slowing pace in construction due to several factors; challenge in securing regulatory permits, funding, and more complex early development work.

Using Collective Impact

- Land
- Buy-in
- Broaden value



We are using Collective Impact strategies to work with external agencies to address common challenges:

Gaining access to public lands

Securing buy-in from regulatory agencies

Broadening the value of trails beyond traditional recreation and gain more stakeholders

The following examples show our approach.



Riparian corridors may initially be perceived as owned by a single agency – its commonly believe that our local Water District owns these lands.

In reality, the corridors are more often a patch work of public and privately owned lands.

This makes trail development complex because acquisition may be required.

Or, it may be cost and time-efficient to follow public parcels, making bridges a necessity

Common Partners



Agency	Shared goals	Tool
Santa Clara Valley Water District	Access to open space	Collaborative Action Plan
Caltrans	Ped/bike travel	Longitudinal Easement
PG&E	Shared maintenance	Joint Use Agreement

We have been able to develop, negotiate and execute agreements with public agencies for join use of lands.

The Santa Clara Valley Water District is frequent partner for trail development.

Our Collaborative Action Plan supports joint use, and clearly assigns roles and responsibilities to each agency.

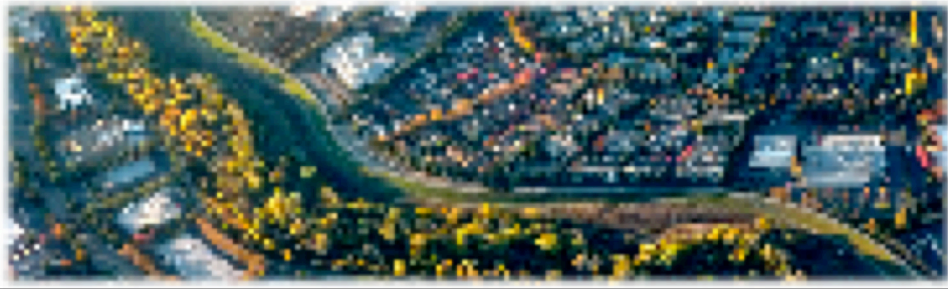
PG&E has permitted public use of its lands, and the development of trails is advantageous because it places most maintenance upon the city.

Working with Caltrans has been possible – and we have developed trails under a “Utility Corridor Easement” which meets our needs.

Tips for Success

Public Agency Partnerships

- Shared interests and goals
- Secure buy-in
- Define goals & schedule
- Start small



Regulators

Santa Clara Valley
Water District



US Army Corps
of Engineers



Almost all trails require oversight and permits from multiple regulatory agencies

Early engagement

- Technical Advisory Committees
 - Invite all regulators / stakeholders
 - Engage at all project stages
 - Know and address their agenda



Form technical advisory committees for all trail projects and engage the responsible agencies early and often

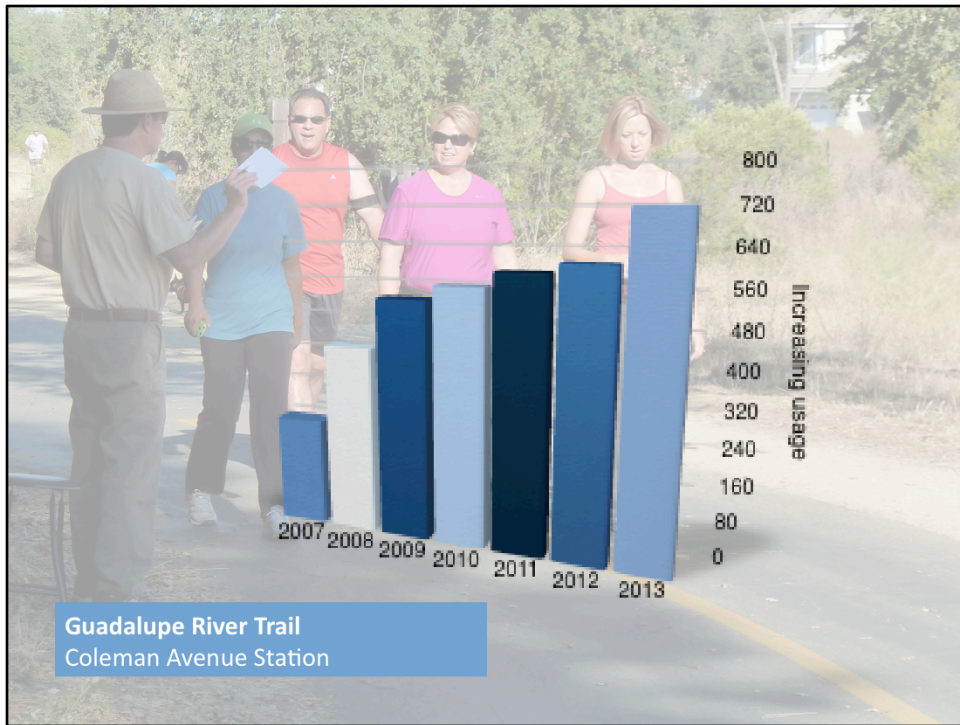
Tips for Success

Regulators

- Understand their unique perspectives
- Preemptively address their concerns
- Offer them more than is required



Example provided for “offer them more than is required” was in the form of an interpretive sign that explained the environmental impacts to the native California Sycamore tree, to be installed with the upcoming Penitencia Creek Trail. The sign doesn’t speed the review or permitting process, but its an important and interesting story to share with trail users and may build good will with the regulators.





Organization	Special Interest	Motivation
Guadalupe River Park Cons.	150-acre park & trail	Donors / Sponsors
Five Wounds / Brookwood Terr.	F-W Rail-Trail	Advocacy
Save Our Trails	Three Creeks Trail	Advocacy
Valley Transportation Authority	CMA	Balanced transportation
Consultants	More trails in San Jose	More work

A number of stakeholders agencies/organizations share an interest in data collection for a variety of motivations. We team with them for volunteer support and for framing our survey questions.

The long-term approach to data collection has helped us build a very clear understanding of trail users needs.

Tips for Success

- Convey past value of counts
- Better understand your audience
- Use your data



We point to Trail Count data to convey to our Council that trails are a desired amenity and are well-used.

We use data to show to granting agencies that their investment will be viewed as valuable and that we can document benefits of that investment.

We use the data as part of master planning work to ensure that trails meet anticipated demands.



From Trail Count 2012, we found that only one person was visiting San Jose during the weekday count. We saw an opportunity to build a more compelling tourism story for trail usage.

This map shows the trail alignment between downtown San Jose and the Bay, but it also recommends attractions within 2 blocks of the trail system. This approach may appeal to a broader group of visitors and conveys that San Jose has a number of interests sites to see.




With tourism in mind, we worked with Public Art staff to conceive and develop a new monumental work of art for the Guadalupe River Trail.


“Lupe the Mammoth” will be installed over the next few months, and will stand 12’ tall, 18” long along the trail, north of Trimble Road.

We think that this art work will further draw people to San Jose and encourage tourism via the trail.


From Trail Count 2014, we documented that 19 persons were tourists/visitors on the weekday count.



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[SanJoseTrails](#)

Collective Impact strategies have been employed to work with agencies in order to address some of our great trail development challenges.